

Washington, DC -- As a first step toward achieving accountability and oversight of the Bush Administration, Rep. Peter Welch questioned the interference in global warming science by Administration officials during a hearing of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee today.

"Politically motivated suppression of science is not only irresponsible, but it highlights a reckless disregard for the public we serve," said Welch.

"The test of leadership is to directly face difficult realities. We must have honest science available to guide us. Overwhelming scientific research shows that global warming is real, it is urgent, and it requires immediate action."

The hearing today opened the 110th Congress's investigation of Bush Administration interference with the work of government climate change scientists.

Rep. Welch's full statement before the Committee this morning:

"For decades, the issue of climate change has focused on a debate about the science. Today, overwhelming scientific research shows that global warming is real, it is urgent, and it requires immediate action. That consensus has not always been present, but now only a shrinking minority remains as skeptics. More often than not, such skepticism has been driven by politics or economic motivations and not the facts.

"We have learned that outspoken scientists have had their sound conclusions revised or interfered with by those motivated by politics, not the truth. Scientists at the seven agencies that studied climate change have reported widespread abuses by the Bush Administration. Politically motivated suppression of science is not only irresponsible, but it highlights a reckless disregard for the public we serve.

"We must fully investigate this politically motivated conduct to be certain that the American people get the benefit from what science can teach us. These acts not only make it harder for Congress to address climate change, they conceal information that is important to the American people and to the world.

"This is a critically important issue to Vermont and Vermonters. From Vermont to California, states have realized they can and they must make a contribution toward a more sustainable future. Meaningful federal policy must follow.

"The test of leadership is to directly face difficult realities. We must have honest science available to guide us."